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ABSTRACT

Administrators and teachers who are formulating a career education program for their school or school district are confronted with a wide range of decisions to be made. By viewing career education as a "curriculum organizer," the authors present the range of questions that must be discussed before decisions and directions are determined. Fourteen dimensions grouped under three major decision categories (curriculum, teaching structures, and bureaucratic/organizational pattern) lead into the major decision factor--change in the existing instructional program. (Author)

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AN ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN FOR DETERMINING LOCAL GOALS IN CAREER EDUCATION

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Millions of dollars and the efforts of thousands of people are being devoted to the development of a variety of career education programs. The impetus for the career education movement was provided in January, 1971, when the Commissioner of the U.S. Office of Education, Sidney P. Marland, Jr., provided a goal: "Every young person completing our school program at grade twelve (will) be ready to enter higher education or to enter useful and rewarding employment." He added, "It is terribly important to teach a youngster the skills he needs to live his life as a fulfilled human being." Nearly a year later, Marland emphasized that "career education is the major objective of the Office of Education at this moment in time and will remain so for the foreseeable future." (1)

Although Marland advocated Career Education and made money available for Career Education development, he did not specifically define "career education" nor suggest specific objectives and strategies for its implementation. Marland felt that since each community's needs, values, beliefs, etc., differ, it is expected that each community will develop a workable and meaningful definition of its own. To accomplish this, school personnel are being involved in the process of deciding how career education should or should not be part of the experience of elementary age children in their district or school. We are writing for those who are now, or soon will be, engaged in this process.

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As we examine many existing career education programs and the thoughts of writers on the subject, we observe that decisions are being made across the total spectrum of the school curriculum. It became very clear to us that those who are working to implement career education need a strategy by which they can see the interrelationships among the decisions they are making. Curriculum writing at best is a difficult, frustrating experience. The temptation is strong to write additions to the existing curriculum without considering how the innovations will fit the total process of education. Even the smallest change in an educational program has a way of affecting the total program or being rejected totally by it. The task of curriculum revision is particularly difficult in career education because a broad interpretation of career goals would include the total school program.

As career education is in the process of being defined and implemented by an increasing number of groups, it is not surprising that the resulting products reflect the educational views of those who develop them. To some it is a guidance program; others think the term is simply another name for vocational education; some refer to career education as any experience which prepares one for the world of work; many feel that career education is happening when children are learning about the occupational clusters representing the current labor field. A few perceive career education as a comprehensive program touching every aspect of a person's life, including occupational productivity, social effectiveness, self realization, and moral responsibility. Some career education advocates can be found waxing eloquent over the need for instilling a work ethic in each child, while others advise that work ethic indoctrination conflicts with an emphasis on teaching children how to think, how to make reasoned choices, and how to act independently. Some advocates look upon the child as

an economic unit; others emphasize the development of the individual. Some would have children making tentative career choices as early as kindergarten; others would attempt to increase a child's work options and keep his options open for most of his school experience. As you examine various career education programs you will find that some programs deal primarily with information, others with skills, others with choice-making, others with social development. Depending on the program in which children are involved, learning experiences include field trips, hands-on experiences, a variety of audio-visual materials, cross-discipline approaches, and reading as sources of career understandings and skills. Some seem to feel that career education is for the disadvantaged; others see it for everyone.

It's difficult to go anywhere in educational circles without meeting either an advocate or an opponent of "career education." An amusing thing about career education (a movement without much humor in it!) is that every person acts as if he knows what career education is, even though no two programs are alike. At one extreme, children in school are told about their later life "outside." At the other, we find advocates who would de-school society, making life the classroom for the child's total instruction.

CAREER EDUCATION AS AN EXPERIENCE ORGANIZER

Many career education writers seem to view career education as a way of organizing the on-going school experiences rather than as a new or discrete body of content. Some writers see it as "the" major educational theme within which all other educational goals should be structured; others see career education as one of a number of themes. Regardless of the scope, most curriculum writers seem to view career education to be a "curriculum organizer." The term "organizer" is used here to refer to a curriculum theme made up of a set of goals which

include at least partial development of most or all of the psychomotor, affective, and cognitive goals of education. Career education as an organizer deals with all aspects of individual role development; it seeks ways to relate growing knowledge of self with the wide range of possible goals for individuals in the society. This view has power for a number of reasons. It provides a theme, or overview of education, which has the potential to:

- make clear the relationships among diverse activities and the individual's own goals. (e.g., As I learn to read, I am opening opportunities for myself for leisure and employment.)
- makes all activities purposeful to the learner in the context of their influence on his present and future. (e.g., "I am learning to write for enjoyment and self-expression now and also for my progress toward being a homemaker, a secretary, and a poet.")
- allows both learner and teacher to perceive growth sequences in a broad context, rather than in immediately measurable fragments.
- has potential to make learning activities a unifying community experience, since it provides a visible structure in which in-school learning and community life experiences are either related or integrated.

CRUCIAL FIRST QUESTIONS

The first question to be asked is, do we need to change the program we provide now? The school day and the school year are already filled. If you decide to make changes, you must do it for more sound reasons than that career education is "in this year," or that money has been made available, or that someone somewhere mandated that you do it. Basic questions need to be asked:

- Do you need to change the present program? Why?
- Will changes eliminate or alter the present program? Which parts? How much?
- Why do other elements of the school district and the society want the school to change?

Total agreement cannot be expected, but discussion of these key points will help to give a focus for further deliberations on points that will implement change. Decision making by any community (of scholars, of peers, etc.) often is strongly influenced by the kinds of structure which have traditionally

operated. In schools, this includes at least three dimensions which must be considered by career education decision makers: the curriculum structure, the teaching structure, and the bureaucratic/organizational structure. If there is to be peace in the family, change in one of the structures should be accompanied by supporting changes in the others.

The most critical stage in career education is the formulation of an implementation plan. It is our impression that some school districts have become hopelessly bogged down because they created implementation teams before what was to be implemented was determined. Indeed, some school districts have sought and obtained financing for what seemed to the writers to be hastily conceived plans which resulted in poor use of money, discouragement of teachers, and potential distrust of program goals by the community. Although it is possible to introduce career education components into a single classroom or into one school in a district, the best utilization of talent and money occurs when the entire bureaucratic/organizational structure is involved.

AN ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING CAREER EDUCATION

To help you develop a career education program, we will present a number of dimensions in education. You should decide which of the elements included in each dimension will influence the structuring of learning experiences, experiences which will prepare children to live quality lives now and in the future. The decisions you make in each area should influence decisions you make in other areas. As you find conflicts in your decisions, you will find it necessary to go back and forth among the dimensions and enlarge, change, or cut out entirely some preceding opinions. Your main goal should be a reasonable amount of harmony among the decisions in each area listed.

Our first set of factors deals with the role you feel the school should play in each person's life role development. "Role" refers to knowledge and

feelings a person holds about how he/she should act in any given situation. A curriculum team should decide which life roles it can and should help children develop. Examine each dimension listed below; decide where you stand in each area. If we have not included a statement or category you would have chosen, include your own. Support the decision you have made with reasons for your choice. When you have completed the task, you should be able to write a summary statement about life roles which should be included as part of a career education plan. As a faculty or a school district committee you will need to compare and pool your perspectives, arriving at a consensus that can be implemented. What is the range of life role concepts that should be developed in the elementary school? If more than one life role will provide focus, should each role be given equal emphasis?

Life Role Dimension

What life roles should be the focus of career education?

economic, social, family and avocational
economic, social and family
economic and civic
economic
other

Examine the content dimension choices given below. Toward what educational ends should the learning environment be structured? If more than one content focus is chosen, should each focus be given equal emphasis?

Content Dimension

What should the scope of learning include?

knowledge, skill and attitude base
knowledge and skill base
knowledge base
skill base

If career education is to be a part of an over-all school program, it is necessary to examine curriculum as a whole. When making career education decisions, we are faced with a number of conflicting conceptions of curriculum:

Curriculum as self teaching experience.

Some career education curriculum writers seem to feel that certain experiences will result in optimum career education goal attainment. The writer has faith that certain activities such as field trips and hands-on experiences will, by their very nature, result in a person prepared to make sound career decisions. A program written by this kind of curriculum thinker will describe the types of career education activities which should be included without much attention to the purpose of the activity. It is assumed that if the activity happens, career education happens.

Curriculum as defined content. Other career education writers hold the view that school experiences should be organized in such a way that children become aware of the world of work and traditional school subjects prepare a person for the world of work. The emphasis is on learning "about"; the content is the focus; the child is the recipient. These writers have faith that if the child knows about something, he is able to apply what he knows. Knowledge is the goal. The ability to apply the knowledge is assumed.

Curriculum as the development of cognitive processes.

Some career education writers would attempt to choose school experiences which focus on intellectual (thinking) operations, helping children to become future-oriented decision makers. Through the application of problem solving methods on real problems, the child becomes a rational man with all the thinking skills necessary to make sound career decisions.

Curriculum as a means for self actualization.

Humanism has been a major influence on a number of career education writers. This approach focuses sharply on the "self" as content. Unlike the cognitive process or curriculum technology approaches, the concern of humanists is very

much on what is taught in school. They conceptualize education as a liberating force, a means of helping the individual discover things for himself. Schooling is seen as a vital and potentially enriching experience. These career education writers view curriculum as being primarily child centered. They are concerned with experiences which influence children's self-concepts and self actualization. While they believe school experiences should be chosen because they help a child grow in his ability to make independent and responsible decisions for his own future, they stress that activity will be judged by the degree of personal satisfaction and growth the individual experiences. Both value clarification and thinking process development are considered to be content. The child examines his experiences for guiding principles.

Humanists are not concerned about guiding the child into clarification or decision making, but that rather he find his own reaction to experiences. The goal is the development of a self-motivated, self-directed individual.

Career education writers are more conservative as a group than a number of curriculum writers who focus on self actualization. While some would sanction any experience if the child "felt" good about it, most career education writers hope to structure a school experience so that children will learn to consider all conceivable alternatives, make guesses as to the consequences of the various alternatives being considered, and finally make choices based upon optimum enhancement of present and future life conditions. The child is expected by the result of his experiences to feel responsible for the effects of his decision on self and others.

Curriculum as a means for social reconstruction.

A number of career education writers focus on the role of education within the larger social context. They typically stress societal needs over individual needs.

These writers vary in the way they would structure school experiences according to their view of the purpose of man. Specifically, they focus on what the life roles of man should be. For example, some want the individual to become a happy worker functioning as a producer-consumer in a well regulated, free enterprise industrial society. Others will stress the need to develop decision makers with a high degree of concern for survival of the bio-sphere and for quality of life; to them man should see himself as protector of the environment. Still others want man's purpose to be harmony between self and others. Some social reconstructionist career education writers would focus on educating children to work toward equal rights for all. Others would stress future planning as a central theme of career education. If you, as a curriculum writer, feel the role of man in society should change in some way and the change would affect life and work roles, then part of the career education decision making process would include social reconstructionist dimensions.

The decision you make in identifying a philosophical base for the curriculum should help you determine how much change will be necessary to accomplish career education in your school district. Your curriculum view decision may include elements from more than one position, but attempt to refine your perspective as clearly as possible.

Curriculum View Dimensions

How do you interpret the school's curriculum?
- Curriculum as self-teaching experiences
- Curriculum as defined content
- Curriculum as the development of cognitive processes
- Curriculum as a means for self-actualization
- Curriculum as social reconstruction
- Curriculum that combines goals listed above
- Other (identify)

The following eleven continuums grow out of the previous ones. Decide which of the aspects of each continuum you would include. Support your decision with reasons for your choices. Remember, your choices of life roles, educational ends, and curricular views should be in agreement with the choices you make in each of the following dimensions.

CURRICULUM DIMENSIONS

Sequence Dimension

What factors are to be considered in choosing age levels for career education experiences?

- Child developmental stages
- Logical sequencing of content
- Ease of integration with present curriculum organizations
- Special needs of divergent cultural and ability groups
- Other

Evaluation Dimension

How will the outcomes of career education be measured?

- Assessment of the quantity and quality of planned opportunities for learning
- Assessment of the classroom environment
- Assessment of the child's knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Assessment of the child's knowledge and skills
- Assessment of the child's knowledge

TEACHING STRUCTURE

Teaching Structure

What instructional design would you choose to help reach the goals you have chosen?

- Open exploration by interests
- Problem solving, multiple solutions
- Hands-on experiences
- Identifiable district or commercially developed materials

Counseling Dimension

What part will the classroom teacher play in helping children develop choice making styles?

- Teacher guides the child in making goal choices
- Teachers with parents and the child make goal choices
- The teacher's role is to implement the child's goal choices
- The teacher has no role in determining or implementing a child's goal choices

Child's Decision Making Dimension

What are the decision making goals for the pupil?

The child feels:

- I am an independent decision maker
- I habitually make my own decisions, using input from associates, authority figures, my family
- I depend on others to help me make decisions
- I depend on others who care for me to make decisions for me
- I make decisions based on societal pressures
- I am a person who depends on those in positions of authority to make my decisions for me

Organization Dimension

How does career education fit into existing programs?

- Becomes the central core for all curriculum
- Is infused into the present curriculum
- Takes the place of present curriculum
- Is added on to the present curriculum
- Other

BUREAUCRATIC/ORGANIZATIONAL

Responsibility Dimension

Who will be responsible for planning, implementation and maintenance of the program?

- Community-school planning committee
- Administrators
- Selected faculty from the total school district
- Career education specialists
- Individual school faculties
- Individual classroom teachers
- Other

Financial Dimension

How will career education be financed?

- Grant requests
- School-business cooperative funding
- Special allotment from the school district
- School-university cooperative in-service arrangement
- School fund-raising projects
- No new funding
- Other

Experience Dimension

Where should learning take place?

- Totally out of school
- Any relevant locality
- School, community, and local area
- In school and school community
- In school with community resources brought in
- Totally in school

Time Dimension

What should be the time span of career education?

- Lifelong education
- High School
- Junior High/High School
- Elementary/Junior High/High School
- Pre-school/Elementary/Junior High/High School
- Other

Limiting Dimension

What factors limit the possibilities for career education?

- Local views against certain teaching practices
- Accessibility of occupational clusters in the community

(more)

Expertise of the coordinator and staff
Available money
Local rules regulating activities such as field trips
Limited number of committed people
Other

The decisions you have made thus far call for change of some sort, or the continuance of your present educational system. Change in school program is difficult to achieve, at least change that is well-founded and has lasting impact. Difficult decisions must be made about the extent of change that is needed and the time allotted to accomplish it.

The curriculum writer must decide whether to remove existing experiences in order to make room for new dimensions or to think of ways for infusing the new into existing programs. Your discussion of the dimensions listed to this point should help to clarify your decisions about change:

Change Dimension

What changes in our present program do we need in order to accomplish our goals for career education?

De-school society
Extend the school day with out-of-school programs and activities
Revise the total school day around a career education focus
Designate a specific period for career education study, design a course of study
Action Research (pilot project)
Replace units of study in certain subject areas (e.g., Language Arts, Social Studies) with career education units
Maintain most of the present program, but with increased emphasis on future life applicability
Use career information as content through which traditional school skills are studied (e.g., alphabetizing, mathematics, library skills, etc.)
Maintain the present program under a new name
Other

Table I summarizes all the decision making dimensions you have considered.

AN ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN FOR DETERMINING

CURRICULUM DIMENSION

LIFE ROLE DIMENSION

What life roles should be the focus of career education?
- Economic, social, family and avocational
- Economic, social and family
- Economic and civic
- Economic
- Other

CONTENT DIMENSION

What should the scope of learning include?
- Curriculum as self teaching experience
- Curriculum as defined content
- Curriculum as the development of cognitive process
- Curriculum as a means of self-actualization
- Curriculum as social reconstruction
- Curriculum that combines the goals listed or others

CURRICULUM VIEW DIMENSION

How do you interpret the school's curriculum?
- Curriculum as technology
- As academic rationalism
- As the development of cognitive processes
- As a means of self-actualization
- As social reconstruction--relevance

SEQUENCE DIMENSION

What factors are to be considered in choosing age levels for career education experiences?
- Child developmental stages
- Logical sequencing of content
- Ease of integration with present curriculum organization
- Special needs of divergent cultural and ability groups
- Other

EVALUATION DIMENSION

How will the outcomes of career education be measured?
- Assessment of the quantity and quality of planned opportunities for learning
- Assessment of the classroom environment
- Assessment of the child's knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Assessment of the child's knowledge and skills
- Assessment of the child's knowledge

TEACHING STRUCTURE

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What instructional design would you choose to help reach the goals you have chosen?
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What are the decision making goals for the pupil?
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- I make decisions based on societal pressures
- I am a person who depends on those in positions of authority to make my decisions for me

ORGANIZATION DIMENSION

How does career education fit into existing programs?
- Becomes the central core for all curriculum
- Is infused into the present curriculum
- Takes the place of present curriculum components
- Is added on to present curriculum
- Other

LOCAL GOALS IN CAREER EDUCATION

BUREAUCRATIC/ORGANIZATIONAL

RESPONSIBILITY DIMENSION

Who will be responsible for planning, implementation and maintenance of the program?
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- Administrators
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FINANCIAL DIMENSION

How will career education be financed?
- Grant requests
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- No new funding
- Other

EXPERIENCE DIMENSION

Where should learning take place?
- Totally out of school
- Any relevant locality
- School, community, and local area
- In school and school community
- In school with community resources brought in
- Totally in school

TIME DIMENSION

What should be the time span of career education?
- Lifelong education
- High School
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- Other

LIMITING DIMENSION

What factors limit the possibilities for career education?
- Local views against certain teaching practices
- Accessibility of occupational cluster in the community
- Expertise of the coordinator and staff
- Available money
- Local rules regulating activities such as field trips
- Limited number of committed people
- Other

C H A N G E D I M E N S I O N

What changes in our present program do we need in order to accomplish our goals for career education?

- Deschool society
- Extend school day with out-of-school programs and activities
- Revise total school day around a career education focus
- Designate a specific period for career education study--design a course of study
- Action research (pilot project)
- Replace units of study in certain subject areas (e.g. Language Arts, Social Studies) with career education units
- Maintain most of the present program, but with increased emphasis on future life applicability
- Use career information as the content through which traditional school skills are studied (e.g. alphabetizing, mathematics, library skills, etc.)
- Maintain the present program under a new name
- Other

A LOOK AT THE DECISION MAKING REFLECTED IN CURRENTLY OPERATING CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

It is our feeling that career education planners should focus on how a person develops attitudes, skills, and thinking processes and help teachers set up learning environments accordingly. Perhaps the greatest obstacle to developing a viable career education program is the oversimplified idea of what teaching and learning is all about. This oversimplification is shared by national policy makers, state departments, parents, school administrators, and teachers. The most stubborn concept is that the chief, if not the only, function of elementary school teaching is to impart knowledge, to explain, and to tell. We hope that the plan we have offered gave you a chance to see your ideas on career education, in fact on all of education, in a much broader light. We have asked you to support your decisions. You may have recognized a number of basic assumptions that underlie this perspective:

1. The developmental stages through which children grow intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially are considered basic to placement of learning experiences.

2. Curriculum planners need to consider the ways in which all educational experience is interrelated.

3. Those who are responsible for implementation should take part in planning.

4. Curriculum revision is a never ending cyclic process.

5. There is a need to assemble reports on career education innovations and to make them accessible to decision makers.

6. Decision making should include face to face involvement between scholars in career education, researchers, school administrators, and school personnel in actual teaching situations.

7. Curriculum innovation should be the result of teachers and administrators learning to study their own programs and to examine the effects of innovations on their students.

8. Teacher knowledge of subject matter is not a direct path to better teaching and learning. An in-service training program should include demonstrations or visitations which focus on teaching strategies. The more radical the changed goal in teaching, the greater the necessity for in-service training. Sequential steps must be developed and time provided for achieving them.

9. Reshaping curriculum is not a matter than can be accomplished in a ten week course. It must be a continuous and deliberate process.

10. Career education planning should involve a cycle of activities leading from beginning analysis of the problems and needs to implementation. The process could take three to five years.

11. Selection and organization of learning experiences should follow, not precede, an analysis of the needs of society, of the individual, and curriculum.

12. The needs of children can only be met if the needs of teachers are identified and implemented.

We believe that a cycle of events should occur as you carefully evolve a good career education program in your school or school district. The process might look like this:

1. Explore career education goals, assess your needs.
2. Define career education goals.
3. Analyze your present program.
4. Select strategies for implementation. Be sure to consider the role of bureaucratic structure, teaching structure, and curriculum dimensions.
5. Decide how to make yourself accountable for what you plan to achieve.
6. Find enough money to do the job.
7. Assign responsibilities. Be specific.
8. Implement.
9. Evaluate.
10. Begin again at #1.

When we see you ten years from now, you should still be growing. You may not be calling what you are doing career education, but we believe career education will be happening. You and the children you teach will be growing as you evaluate, plan, choose strategies, find money, implement, evaluate, and begin again.